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ABSTRACT

This booklet helps teachers understand how to increase student motivation and interest and how to design lively, creative, and interactive lessons that will enrich learning. Chapter 1, "The Differences That Impact Learning," describes the differentiated classroom and provides teachers with an understanding of the many variations of how children learn. It focuses on instructional needs, multiple intelligences, learning modalities, cognitive levels, student backgrounds, and personal interests. Chapter 2, "Teaching with a Differentiated Approach," focuses on teaching strategies for differentiated instruction (cooperative learning, individual learning, learning centers, technology tools, and textbooks) and presents the differentiated instructional design matrix. Chapter 3, "Planning Guide for Differentiated Instruction," provides practical decision-driven planning tools. The guide has three sections: Desired Results, Lesson Design, and Evidence of Learning. Each section is divided into three columns. Column one contains a series of questions related to differentiated instruction and learning outcomes. Column two contains information and data to facilitate answering the planning questions in column one. Column three contains notes and comments related to the differentiated instructional design process. (Contains 17 bibliographic references.) (SM)

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How to Differentiate Instruction
Adapted from Chapter 3 of
"Powerful Lesson Planning Models:
The Art of 1,000 Decisions"
A Skylight Guide
Grades K-12

Janice Skowron

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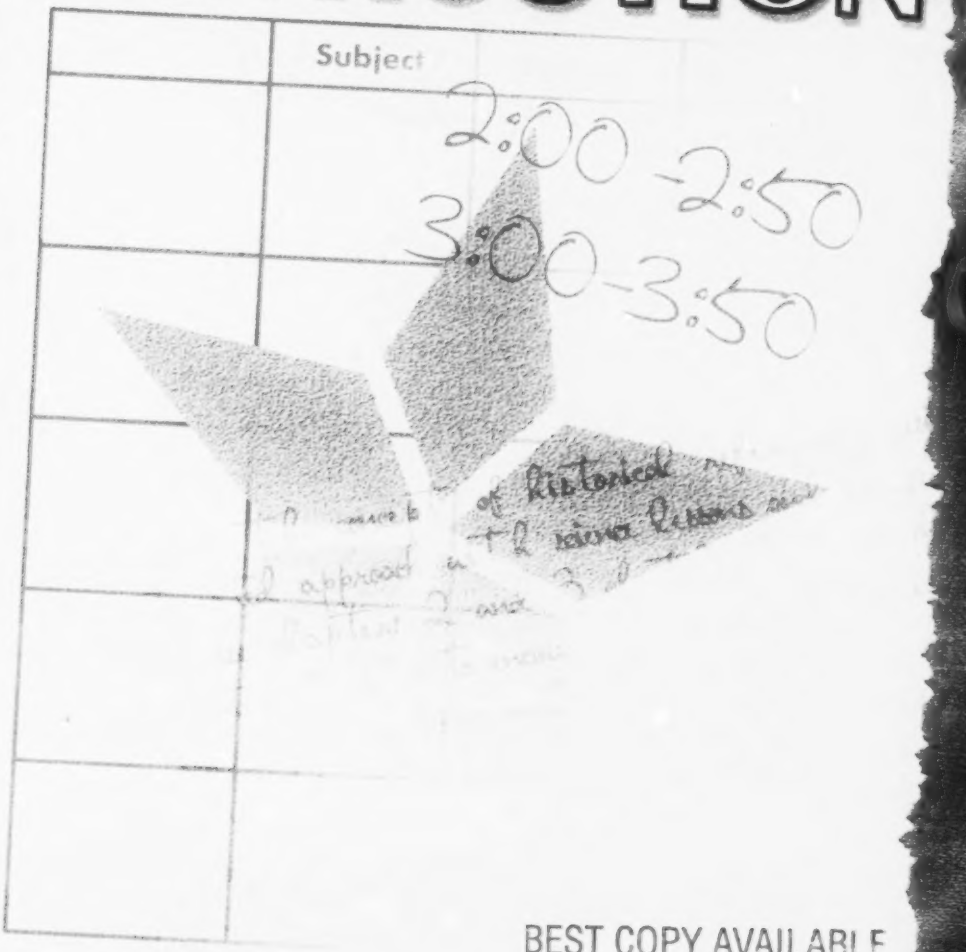
A SkyLight Guide

Grades K–12

How To DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION



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Janice Skowron

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Adapted from chapter 3 of
Powerful Lesson Planning Models: The Art of 1000 Decisions.

Janice Skowron

Arlington Heights, Illinois

How To Differentiate Instruction

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Fax 847-290-6609
info@skylightedu.com
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President: Carol Luitjens
Executive Editor: Chris Jaeggi
Senior Acquisitions Editor: Jean Ward
Editor: Anne Kaske
Cover Designer and Illustrator: David Stockman
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There are

one-story intellects,

two-story intellects, and

three-story intellects with skylights.

All fact collectors, who have no aim beyond their facts, are

one-story minds.

Two-story minds

compare, reason, generalize,

using the labors of the fact collectors

as well as their own.

Three-story minds

idealize, imagine, predict—their best illumination comes from above,

through the skylight.

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

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The Differences That Impact Learning

Anyone who spends even a short time in a classroom sees that students differ not only in physical appearance but also in how they learn, what their interests are, the prior experiences they have had, and their cognitive strengths and weaknesses. These differences become even more pronounced as students advance through the grades. A "one-size-fits-all" model of instruction, therefore, cannot possibly reach all students in a classroom. "That students differ may be inconvenient, but it is inescapable" (Sizer 1997).

Differentiated instruction is a teaching approach that provides a variety of learning options to accommodate differences in how students learn. Some differences that impact learning are related to the student's prior knowledge and experience, learning preferences and modality, cognitive level, and personal interests. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), a learner reaches his or her fullest capacity when a task is at an optimal level—neither too difficult nor too simple. When the learner's mental

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and emotional focus are linked together in learning, a state of "flow" occurs that enhances and sustains learning (Goleman 1995). Teachers try to create "flow" for their students by providing appropriately challenging activities.

Instructional Needs

Instructional needs are determined by assessing what a student knows and is able to do in relation to a learning standard. A learning profile obtained through various assessments points to skills, concepts, and/or processes that need to be further developed. Assessment sources include observation of classroom performance, evaluation of artifacts (work students produce), performance-based assessments, and standardized test results.

Multiple Intelligences

Effective instruction combines what students learn with how they learn. In the past we examined I.Q. in an attempt to determine the strength of a student's ability to learn. In *Frames of Mind,* Howard Gardner questions the view of I.Q. as a single entity and theorizes the existence of several intellectual strengths or competences within an individual (1983). Gardner recognizes eight intelligences, which are briefly summarized in Figure 1.1. Students provided with activities that allow them to use their preferred intelligence confidently perform at their best.

Learning Modalities

We have long known that learning modalities—auditory, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile—influence how we learn. Visual learners benefit from graphic representations, auditory learners benefit from aural representations, kinesthetic learners benefit from bodily involvement activities, and tactile learners benefit from touching and feeling shapes, forms, and textures (Sprenger 1999). Teachers routinely use posters, charts, and models; recordings, discussion and songs; construction and physical representations;

Gardner's Intelligences

Verbal/Linguistic: to use the core operations of language

Musical/Rhythmic: to use the core set of musical elements

Logical/Mathematical: to use inductive and deductive reasoning, solve abstract problems, and understand complex relationships

Visual/Spatial: to perceive the visual world accurately and recreate one's visual experiences

Naturalist: to survive in and adapt to one's environment

Bodily/Kinesthetic: to control and interpret body motions, manipulate physical objects, and establish harmony between the body and mind

Interpersonal: to interact with others toward one goal

Intrapersonal: to form an accurate model of oneself

Figure 1.1

and dance or physical movement. An individual's predominant learning modality does not negate the presence of the other modalities; teachers should provide multimodal activities throughout their lessons.

Cognitive Levels

Learners engage in types of thinking that range from a simple literal level to more complex abstract levels (Bloom 1984). These levels are not distinct but overlap and are used simultaneously by students in learning situations (Good and Brophy 1997). All students need and benefit from learning activities that challenge them to use complex thinking and reasoning.

Background of Experiences

Students who have a rich background of experiences and are able to connect new experiences into patterns of meaning seem to learn and retain concepts better than those who do not (Caine and Caine 1991; Jensen 2000). Teachers help students make sense of learning by connecting new learning to what is already known. When students know little about a topic, it is important to build the background that will enable them to benefit from instruction. When students have extensive knowledge of a topic, instruction should enrich and extend what they already know.

Personal Interests

Students develop an interest in a particular topic or area for a variety of reasons. Some interests are fleeting, some last a lifetime. Regardless of what or why, interests do motivate and sustain learning. The teacher who allows students choices and opportunities to select learning activities capitalizes on personal interests that lead students into learning and studying a topic (Diamond and Hopson 1998).

The Differentiated Classroom

A differentiated instructional design may be used for a part of the school year for certain units or it may become an overarching philosophy toward which all classroom instruction is geared. The associated planning and teaching techniques incorporated in differentiated instructional design evolve as teachers become experienced and comfortable with this approach. Teachers who use differentiated instruction generally begin by implementing short units, which are modified and expanded over time. Planning differentiated instruction coordinates student learning characteristics (how students learn) with learning standards (what students learn). Darling-Hammond (1997, 74) states, "...there is no prepackaged set of steps or lessons that will secure under-

standing for every learner in the same way." Research supports teaching practices that honor the individuality of students in terms of their experiences, interests, and prior knowledge.

Why Differentiated Instruction Is a Good Idea

Support for differentiated instruction is seen in recent research on how the brain learns. While brain research in itself does not tell us how to teach, it can inform our instructional practices. The right amount of challenge is a critical element in learning—too much leads to frustration, too little leads to boredom (Jensen 2000). A differentiated instructional plan helps to ensure that students participate in learning activities that are at (or at least close to) their optimal learning level.

When students are engaged and challenged in their work, they become motivated and invested in their learning. Activities that help students see connections to real-life situations and apply what they learn to new situations create opportunities for transfer of learning (Fogarty 1997). Transfer, or use of knowledge, skills, and processes in new situations, is perhaps the ultimate goal of education. It matters little if we possess vast amounts of knowledge and information if we cannot use and apply that knowledge.

Students need complex real-life experiences to learn and grow. Simple linear approaches such as those designed to teach isolated skills are not as powerful as those that provide interactive, hands-on activities where students explore, manipulate, and connect ideas and concepts (Caine and Caine 1991). An example of a complex activity that asks students to apply what they know to solve a problem or perform a task is shown in Figure 1.2. The student must determine what the problem is; call to mind which skills and processes already learned will help solve the problem; and continually evaluate whether or not he or she is on the right track and make adjustments accordingly. This metacognitive strategy is critical in problem solving and increases the likelihood of accuracy. The solution—the outcome of the task—is judged

against some criteria (either provided by the teacher or determined by the student).

Design a Compact Disk Cover

A famous compact disk company has asked you to design a compact disk cover. You are to submit your design on graph paper according to the company's directions that are outlined below. Be sure you include all the necessary items.

1. The title should occupy one quarter of the cover.

2. Include all of the following items on the cover and tell what fractional part of the cover each occupies:
   - titles and descriptions of songs
   - information about the artist
   - pictures or graphics

3. Explain in words what fractional part each item is compared to the whole cover.

Figure 1.2

The Role of Learning Standards in Differentiated Instruction

Learning standards provide descriptions of what students should know and be able to do. Most state boards of education, professional organizations, and school districts have developed lists of content area standards. The formats used by different organizations may be different, but the purpose and intent is the same—to provide information on what students should know and be

able to do. A closer look at the standards reveals similarities and overlapping. When teachers put learning standards to use in planning instruction, they select the standards their students need to meet. Then they plan instruction focused on those standards.

In a differentiated classroom, students are not learning different things—they are learning the same things differently. Learning standards drive the development of learning activities. However, instead of a single activity all students are expected to engage in, a range of activities is offered. Even as students are involved in different learning activities, they are still addressing the same learning standards. The challenge to the teacher is to select the characteristics that are to be differentiated based on his or her knowledge of the students in relation to the learning standards that are to be taught. This becomes the framework for designing activities that focus on the range of differences.

Standards are central to instructional planning. Inexperienced teachers tend to jump in and begin planning activities—what the students will do. However, before planning the activities, decisions must be made regarding what students will learn—what learning standards are to be addressed. The activities are the means to this end. The way students go about acquiring these principles and skills through various learning activities is what differentiated learning is all about. In planning differentiated instruction, the teacher must first decide what learning standards will be addressed and assessed, next decide the basis for differentiation, and then plan appropriate activities.

Teaching with a Differentiated Approach

Several teaching strategies lend themselves to differentiated instruction. Students work well in small groups or individual activities. Whole group instruction may be appropriate when common instructional needs arise. A variety of materials and sources of information is necessary in differentiated classrooms, which is easy to obtain with today's technology.

Teaching Strategies for Differentiated Instruction

Cooperative Learning

Robert Sylwester (1995) believes cooperative grouping arrangements that promote positive social interaction among students enhance learning. When students work as members of a group,

each contributes to the purpose of the group. The interdependence of the group members impacts the functioning of the group as well as the outcome. In their book on best practices, Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (1993, 143) state that ". . . every child needn't study every possible topic, and that not everyone has to study all the same topics. Indeed, it is good educational practice (and solid preparation for adult life) to be part of a community where tasks and topics are parceled out to work groups, task forces, teams, or committees." Teachers may "jigsaw" an activity or task into several parts and assign groups to one part. When groups share learning with the entire class, the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle are fit together and students learn from one another.

Individual Learning (Self-Selection/Self-Pacing)

There are valid reasons for students to work individually. A student with an intense interest in exploring a topic from another perspective, a specialized need that does not "fit" any of the group activities, or a preference to work alone should be allowed to do so. Further, all students should be given opportunities to work independently to practice self-reliance and show what they can do on their own. Choice of working with a group or individually gives students control over how they learn and promotes motivation and independence.

Learning Centers

A differentiated learning environment calls for a greater range of materials since students perform different tasks and engage in different activities. Learning centers where materials are assembled for students to complete their learning activities may be set up throughout the classroom. The learning centers coincide with the task. An example of a learning center is a science experiment students perform and write up. Here all the necessary materials are provided, students are given directions, and the teacher monitors and observes the students. At the kindergarten level, learning centers may be set up based on a particu-

lar learning standard such as letter identification, with plastic letters and cards for matching. Learning center activities may be designed for small group, partner, or individual learning.

Technology Tools

Providing materials for differentiated learning is easier today than ever before. The Internet can serve as a source of boundless content information. Several Web sites allow students to explore topics on many levels of understanding from the simple to abstract. Software programs are available that provide instruction on basic literal factual information (math facts) as well as more analytical, open-ended explorations of topics. Software reviews and other valuable educational technology information may be found at <www.techlearning.com>. In this new learning environment, it is increasingly common for students to use technology for learning and to exhibit their learning through technology.

Textbooks and Differentiated Instruction

Now more than ever before, learning to access, use, and evaluate information is a vital skill. Confining students to a single text limits their perspective; students must understand that information comes from a variety of sources. A textbook is one resource to use along with other print materials, Web sites, video documents, primary source documents, expert interviews, etc.

A criticism of American education is that it promotes superficial coverage of a vast amount of material with little opportunity for deep understanding to develop (Stigler and Hiebert 1999). The volume of material contained in most textbooks and curriculum guides makes for a rushed coverage of content with little time to discuss and connect concepts. When teachers use the learning standards to sort out what is important for students to learn, they may find that not all the content contained in a textbook is necessary or that the textbook does not contain the material needed. Planning for differentiated instruction involves

analyzing the materials available for learning and making choices as to what is necessary and what is not.

The Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix

The Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix (Figure 2.1) is an approach to developing differentiated activities for students. The purpose is to meet a wide range of student needs related to specific learning standards. Learning standards require the student to know facts or to extend, perform, or apply their learning. Learning activities must be designed to meet the requirement inherent in each learning standard. The way in which the teacher designs a learning activity determines the focus and direction for students. Teachers focus and direct students through activities: *literal activities* are used to acquire basic information; *relational activities* are used to connect information from various sources, including personal background knowledge; *transformational activities* are used to manipulate, transcribe, or apply learning in a different way; and *extensional activities* are used to create, originate, evaluate, and in other ways produce something new.

In designing learning activities, the teacher uses certain words or phrases that support the requirement inherent in the learning standard. Teachers must be cognizant that the learning standards apply to all students. All students, regardless of their instructional level, need opportunities to engage in higher order thinking and learning.

Content General/Content Specific Design

Differentiated instructional design may be either content general or content specific. A content general design is applicable for many lessons of a common nature. A content general design contains activities that may apply to more than one lesson or unit. Since the activities are stated in general terms it is possible

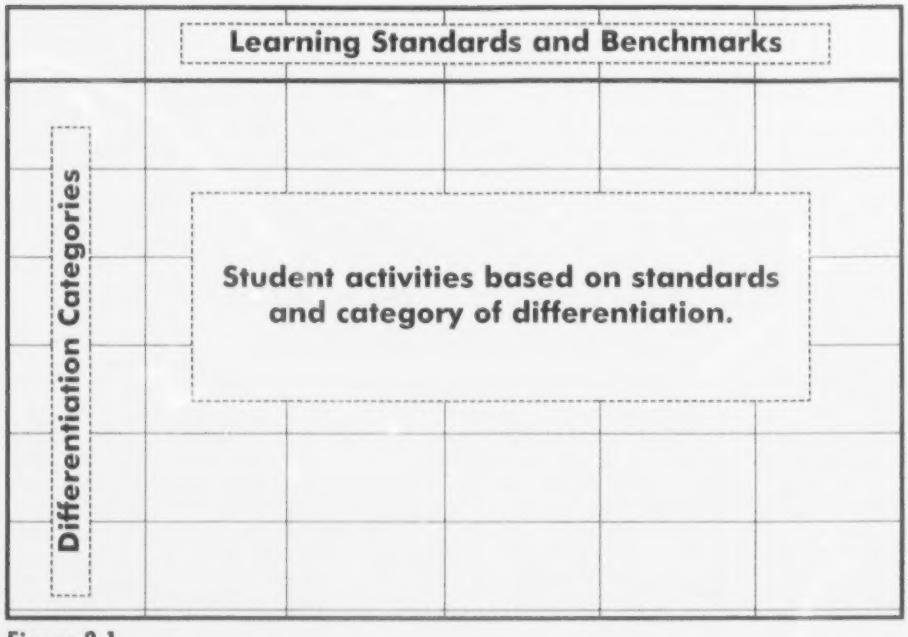
Learning Standards and Benchmarks
Differentiation Categories
Student activities based on standards and category of differentiation.

Figure 2.1

to use them in more than one learning situation. An example of a content general design would be one for reading fiction—the design can be used for more than one novel. A content specific design is for a specific lesson or unit, such as the U.S. Civil War. More general learning standards related to the key events of the Civil War would be itemized into specific learning standards related to such topics as the causes of the war, the battles fought, and the outcomes.

Planning Guide for Differentiated Instruction

The Differentiated Instructional Design Planning Guide is a thinking process approach to guide decision-making regarding planning for differentiated instruction. The guide has three sections: (1) Desired Results, (2) Lesson Design, and (3) Evidence of Learning. Each section is divided into three columns. Column one contains a series of questions related to differentiated instruction and learning outcomes, column two contains information and data to facilitate answering the planning questions in column one, and column three contains notes and comments related to the differentiated instructional design process. The completed samples provided are for a Grade 8 Language Arts class.

Desired Results

What's the rationale?

The first question to answer when planning to differentiate instruction is: Why is there a need to differentiate instruction? Valid reasons should exist for differentiation of activities. When students have similar needs differentiation may not be necessary. When students' diversity contributes to the learning of others, whole class activities may be preferable. Understanding the characteristics of the students in the class helps to form the rationale for using a differentiated instructional design.

A corollary question is: What is the basis for differentiation? That is, how will students be grouped for differentiation—levels of performance, interests, learning styles, or other variables? To maintain a manageable plan, the categories of differentiation should be somewhat limited. Too many categories will produce too many activities that may make management difficult. It is probably best to start with a few activities and increase the number as both teacher and students become comfortable and experienced with this instructional approach. See Figure 3.1 for a Desired Results Planning Guide and Figure 3.2 for a completed Desired Results Sample at the end of this chapter.

Constructing the Differentiated Instructional Design

A Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix (Figure 2.1) is a framework that organizes and documents the instructional activities. The horizontal axis contains the learning standards; the vertical axis contains the basis for differentiation. For example, if differentiation is to occur based on cognitive levels, these levels become part of the vertical axis. If differentiation is to occur based on Gardner's eight intelligences, the intelligences become the vertical axis. A specific, well-planned design makes implementation manageable and efficient.

Think About Assessment Strategies

Students' learning may be assessed through a rubric for each of the instructional activities on the matrix. These are performance-based assessments that are embedded in instruction. As with all performance-based assessments, rubrics communicate expectations and define criteria for performance. A selected response assessment is also possible and may be considered especially for the literal types of activities.

Lesson Design

The differentiated instructional design documents and communicates to others what learning standards are being addressed in the classroom. It may be a simple design based on a few learning standards and activities or a more complex design incorporating several standards integrated across content areas. The design should never become so complex as to be overwhelming to the students or the teacher. Beginning with a simple design and expanding over the years is an efficient and manageable way to plan. See Figure 3.3 for a Lesson Design Planning Guide and Figure 3.4 for a completed Lesson Design Sample at the end of this chapter.

Evidence of Learning

Initially, assessment is considered in section one: Planning for Desired Results. As the differentiated instructional plan nears completion, the assessment of student learning and expectations for performance are finalized and rubrics that define criteria and performance levels are developed. See Figure 3.5 for an Evidence of Learning Planning Guide and Figure 3.6 for a completed Evidence of Learning Sample at the end of this chapter.

Using the Differentiated Instructional Design Planning Guide

The Differentiated Instructional Design Planning Guide is a thinking process approach to planning. Preservice teachers and new teachers will find it helpful to follow all the steps in using the model. Experienced teachers with an understanding of instructional design may find that they need only review the questions and activities and focus on those areas that will enhance their planning efforts. This structure is a helpful planning tool, but experienced teachers know that change options and flexibility for improvisation as the plan unfolds are also important.

1. Read the planning guide in its entirety.

Become thoroughly familiar with the planning guide before you begin using it. This will save you time. Get the "big picture" in mind first.

2. Think it through.

Begin with Section 1: Desired Results. Think about the questions in column one and write down your thoughts and reactions. Consult the data and information sources suggested in column two and note the reminders and supplemental information in column three. Add notes and comments of your own that will be helpful in subsequent planning. Planning questions may be deleted or added to fit your situation. Continue through Section 2: Lesson Design and Section 3: Evidence of Learning.

3. Synthesize the information.

The thinking process in step two above provides a great deal of information. Any of the instructional activities may be taught as mini-lessons within the differentiated plan. Section 2 of the Differentiated Instructional Design Planning Guide shows where direct lessons fit into the overall scheme.

Summary of General Steps for Differentiated Instruction

The Differentiated Instructional Design Planning Guide contains the detailed description of how to plan for differentiated instruction. The steps below are a general outline of the process.

1. Think through the process of differentiated instruction using the Differentiated Instructional Planning Guide.
2. Determine the rationale for using a differentiated instructional approach.
3. Determine categories for differentiation. Fill in categories on the Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix (Figure 2.1).
4. Determine what learning standards will be addressed. Fill in learning standards on the Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix (Figure 2.1).
5. Develop activities based on category for differentiation and learning standard. Fill in activities on the Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix (Figure 2.1).
6. Develop mini-lessons as needed.

Reflective Practice

Merely following an outline or filling in a template is not sufficient to develop skill in instructional design. Instructional design is a metacognitive, reflective process where the teacher thinks, reflects, adjusts, and fine-tunes the various components until a powerful lesson plan emerges. When reflection is an intrinsic part of the instructional planning process and teachers take time to analyze their planning efforts, they learn through their experiences, and future planning becomes more effective and efficient.

Planning Guide for Differentiated Instruction

PLANNING GUIDE—DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

DESIRED RESULTS

Use these questions as a thinking guide to plan a differentiated instructional design.

PLANNING QUESTIONS AND DECISIONS	INFORMATION AND DATA SOURCES	NOTES AND COMMENTS
1. Why is there a need to differentiate instruction?	Review student data, performance, observations, and professional literature.	The decision and subsequent planning for differentiated instruction may be before a unit of study or any time during a unit of study when it becomes apparent that differentiation is needed to accommodate student needs.
2. How will students will be grouped for differentiation (levels of performance, interests, learning styles)?	Student data on performance levels, interests, or learning styles may be used to determine instructional activity groups.	An informal student interest survey, observational checklist, or pretest may supply additional data.
3. What are the learning standards to be achieved?	Review content, skills, process, and concept standards required at district and state levels.	Select those standards that will be made more meaningful through differentiation.
4. How will learning standards be organized and documented?	A Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix (Figure 2.1) is used to plan and keep track of differentiated activities.	Once the learning standards and the basis for differentiation are decided, a Differentiated Instructional Design is developed. Specific activities will be added later. This plan documents the standards, activities, and categories of differentiation.
5. How will the learning standards be assessed? Are combined or embedded assessments feasible? What assessment materials are available and what materials need to be developed?	Review: a. required and optional assessments b. rubrics and assessments in district curriculum guides, teacher manuals, other sources	Planning for assessment is a recursive process. Assessment strategies and tools are tentatively outlined in the initial stages of instructional design, reconsidered and modified as the design emerges, and then finalized with the finalized product. Students are held responsible for the learning inherent in the activities they performed.
6. How will students' difficulties be recognized along the way?	Use formative assessments and observational techniques to determine students progress or difficulties.	
7. How will assessment results be communicated to students and parents?	Consider report cards, grading scale, portfolios, and other means.	Determine what students and parents need to know before, during, and after the unit of instruction.

Figure 3.1

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SAMPLE

DESIRED RESULTS –DIFFERENTIATED Planning Questions and Decisions

Grade 8 Language Arts Class

1. Why is there a need to differentiate instruction?

My students exhibit a wide range of reading abilities. I would like to meet their needs yet still have them participate as a whole group. I have tried in class ability grouping using different textbooks—students were too segregated. I would like to give them reading assignments on the same general topic but allow them to read material at their level, and have them discuss books around a common theme.

2. How will students be grouped for differentiation (levels of performance, interests, learning styles)?

Last year's test results show a wide range of reading abilities. Students will be grouped based on a reading level range. Within each range activities will be selected to tap into more transformational and extensional activities.

3. What are the learning standards to be achieved?

Learning objectives relate to the basic story elements: character, setting, events, problem, solution. Students should make connections to previous readings or information they have related to the story. Activities will be group discussion and one individual writing assignment.

4. How will learning standards be organized and documented?

The Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix will be used to document the various activities for each group based on the story elements.

5. How will the learning concepts be assessed? Are combined or embedded assessments feasible? What assessment materials are available and what materials need to be developed?

The assessment is embedded in the activities. The writing assignment will be scored according to the rubric and incorporated in the student's quarterly grade.

6. How will students' difficulties be recognized along the way?

Students will read independently and meet in their groups to discuss and complete the activities. I will monitor students as they read independently through an informal reading inventory technique to be sure they can handle the material. I will sit in with the groups as they complete the activities and facilitate their work.

7. How will assessment results be communicated to students and parents?

Students will compile their work in a folder. I will complete a rubric on their work. Each student will evaluate their own performance on the rubric. All materials will be sent home to parents.

Figure 3.2

Section 2

PLANNING GUIDE—DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

DESIGN

Use these questions as a thinking guide to plan a differentiated instructional design.

Planning Questions and Decisions	Information and Data Sources	Notes and Comments
1. What are the specific learning standards/ benchmarks to be achieved?	Refer to the Differentiated Instructional Design Planning Chart developed in section one.	
2. What are the categories of differentiation?		
3. What activities correlate to each standard and each differentiation category?	Curriculum guides, teaching manuals, professional literature, best practices information, etc. are sources of information for ideas and activities. Use the Differentiated Instructional Design Matrix (Figure 2.1) to document the standards and activities.	In some cases, activities may overlap to such a degree that they are not really different. When this is the case, leave that box on the matrix planning chart blank. It is not necessary to fill in an activity for every box on the matrix.
4. How long will the activities take?	Calendar of school events, holidays, curriculum pacing guides, and testing schedules are sources of information for scheduling.	Develop a specific organized calendar and schedule for the activities. Balance the amount of time with the priority or importance of the activity.
5. What lessons will be taught?		Even when most standards are taught through differentiated activities, there may be times when it is appropriate to conduct lessons on common needs with the entire class or with a small group. Each lesson will contain all the components of the Basic Lesson Design. • motivating opening • teaching/learning strategies • materials and resources • grouping • closure • follow up practice • assessment
6. Are there any foreseeable pitfalls in this lesson?		Think ahead to avoid potential difficulties.
7. What will I do if the lesson/unit doesn't work out?		A fall-back plan can keep a flop from becoming a disaster.

Figure 3.3

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SAMPLE

DESIGN – DIFFERENTIATED
Planning Questions and Decisions
Grade 8 Language Arts Class

1. What are the specific learning standards/benchmarks to be achieved?
The learning standards relate to the basic story components: characters, setting, problem, events, and solution. The Differentiated Instructional Matrix documents the learning standards and how they will be met based on students' reading levels.

2. What are the categories of differentiation?
There are three categories for differentiation: grade level reading ability, above grade level reading ability, and below grade level reading ability. Students will be grouped according to my observations and test scores. If this goes well, I may try to extend the categories based on books that are selected by the students.

3. What activities correlate to each objective and each differentiation category?
Activities will be written out using the terms that correspond to literal, relational, transformational, and extensional learning. Activities will be documented on the Differentiated Instructional Matrix.

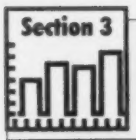
4. How long will the activities take?
It is expected that students will do the reading in class and at home and then complete the activities in class over a period of 8 school days. Since this is a "first run," the time period may be adjusted to be more or less than 8 days.

5. What lessons will be taught?
I plan to do a vocabulary introduction activity and a DRTA for the first chapter with group three. This will provide some support and hopefully build confidence for reading the rest of the book on their own.

6. Are there any foreseeable pitfalls in this lesson?
I'll have to monitor students closely since this will be their first experience with group work.

7. What will I do if the lesson/unit doesn't work out?
I could eliminate the group work but it is more likely that I will work through any rough spots and adjust accordingly.

Figure 3.4



Planning Guide—Differentiated Instruction

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING

Use these questions as a thinking guide to plan a differentiated instructional design.

Planning Questions and Decisions	Information and Data Sources	Notes and Comments
1. How will students demonstrate their learning?	Refer to curriculum resource information and best practices information related to types of assessment.	Refer to your planning notes in section one as decisions regarding assessment are finalized.
2. How will the assessment be scored?		Design appropriate rubrics to show criteria and expectations for performance. Consider student participation in design of rubrics. A differentiated classroom may have common assessments, however, students should be held responsible only for what they have been taught.
3. How will the assessment be reported?	Check schoolwide or districtwide requirements and policies related to grading.	If a schoolwide grading scale is required, be sure to align rubric levels with the grading scale. Consider the development and use of student portfolios as a means of providing feedback to students and parents.
4. How will the assessment results be used?		Use assessment results to determine student strengths and weaknesses and plan the next lessons.

Figure 3.5

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SAMPLE

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING – DIFFERENTIATED
Planning Questions and Decisions

Grade 8 Language Arts Class

1. How will the students demonstrate their learning?	2. How will the assessment be scored?	3. How will the assessment be reported?	4. How will the assessment results be used?
All students will complete a story map graphic organizer describing the story components.	*Story maps will be assessed with a rubric.*	*Students will receive a copy of the story map rubric scoring results. They will have the opportunity to add to the story map if there are any noted deficiencies.*	*Assessment results will provide feedback for the students and the teacher regarding comprehension of the story. Scores will be included in the student's quarterly grade report for language arts.*
Students will self-select three activities to complete from the Differentiated Instructional Design Activity Organizer. Each selected activity must be from a different row.	*The students' written responses will not be scored but will be used in a compare/contrast group discussion of the books.*	*Students will be assessed on the degree of participation in discussion – none, limited, and involved.*	*The degree of participation will provide feedback for the student and the teacher on how ideas are communicated.*
One of the self-selected activities will be submitted as a written assignment.	*Written assignments will be assessed with the appropriate rubric – narrative, descriptive/expository, or persuasive. Students will determine which rubric is to be used according to what type of writing they did.*	*Copy of the rubric will be returned to the student with the teacher's scoring and comments. Students will be asked to use the rubric to self score their writing.*	*Copies of the teacher's scores and the student's scores will be sent home to parents. The teacher's scores will be included in the student's quarterly grade report for language arts.*

Figure 3.6

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How To DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION

Today's classrooms are populated with a diverse student body. Students come with different levels of energy, enthusiasm, attention, and academic readiness. *How To Differentiate Instruction* will help teachers understand how to increase motivation and interest and how to design lively, creative, and interactive lessons that will enrich learning. This booklet provides educators with the following:

- an understanding of the many variations of how children learn.
- an overview of the theory that supports differentiated instruction.
- practical decision-driven planning tools.

How To Differentiate Instruction is adapted from *Powerful Lesson Planning Models: The Art of 1,000 Decisions,* which includes full planning models for essential, integrated, and problem-based learning.

Janice Skowron, Ph.D.

Janice Skowron, Ph.D., is a highly-regarded instructional design consultant and trainer who has developed, implemented, and assessed all aspects of curriculum and instructional programs. Dr. Skowron, a former classroom teacher and assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction, is author of *Powerful Lesson Planning Models: The Art of 1,000 Decisions,* a SkyLight Professional Development publication.

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